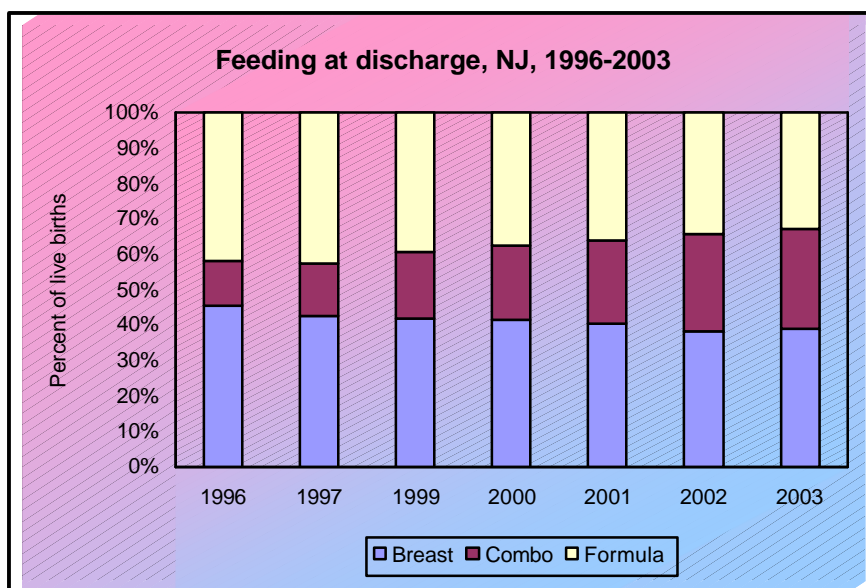


MONTHLY HEALTH DATA FACT SHEET August 2003

August 1-7 is World Breastfeeding Week

- The percentage of mothers in New Jersey exclusively breastfeeding in the 24 hours prior to the infant's discharge from the hospital has decreased from 44% in 1996 to 37% in 2003. Formula only feeding has also decreased from 38% to 31%, while breastfeeding in combination with formula feeding has increased from 12% to 27%.
- This pattern is consistent regardless of the mother's age, race, ethnicity, marital status, birthplace, level of educational attainment, parity (number of previous live births), type of prenatal care provider, infant's sex, or plurality (singletons, twins, triplets, etc.).



- Breastfeeding at discharge is more likely among older mothers, non-Hispanic white and Asian/Pacific Islander mothers, married mothers, mothers with higher levels of education, mothers with fewer previous births, mothers who received prenatal care from a private physician, and mothers who delivered singletons.
- Formula feeding at discharge is more likely among younger mothers, non-Hispanic black mothers, unmarried mothers, U.S.-born mothers, mothers with less education, mothers with two or more previous births, mothers who delivered twins and higher order births, and mothers who received prenatal care at an HMO, clinic, or through a government program.
- Combination (breast and formula) feeding at discharge is most likely among Hispanic mothers and foreign-born mothers.
- Among participants in the WIC Program, New Jersey has a higher percentage of mothers breastfeeding than the nation as a whole. 54% of mothers surveyed said they ever breastfed, 33% breastfed at least 6 months, and 22% breastfed at least 1 year. The national figures are 50%, 21%, and 13%, respectively.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics states that breastfeeding is the best, most complete source of nutrition for babies. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months is preferred over combination and formula feeding, provides ideal nutrition, and is sufficient to support optimal growth and development.
- For the baby, human milk is easy to digest and provides antibodies to protect against illness. There is a decreased likelihood of allergies, chronic diseases, dental caries, and overweight later in life. Breastfeeding promotes appropriate jaw, teeth, and speech development as well as overall facial development. Breastfeeding enhances baby's immune system, cognitive development, visual acuity, and development of the brain, liver, intestines, pancreas, and other organs.

- For the mother, breastfeeding decreases the risk of breast and ovarian cancer. There is an easier loss of pregnancy weight, improved bone remineralization, and less postpartum bleeding with less risk of anemia. Breastfeeding is convenient, virtually free, and promotes mother-infant bonding.
- Breastfeeding also benefits employers because mothers are less likely to miss days of work to care for a sick baby and breastfeeding benefits the environment because, obviously, there is no packaging or processing required for human milk.

For more data from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services: www.state.nj.us/health/chs

For more information about breastfeeding from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Family Health Services: www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/wbfweek.htm

Sources:

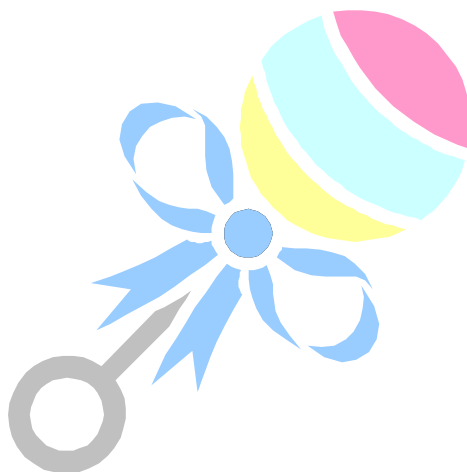
New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Center for Health Statistics:
New Jersey 1995-2003 Electronic Birth Certificate Data Files, unpublished data

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC):
2001 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System, unpublished data

American Academy of Pediatrics:
[Policy Statement: Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk](#)

La Leche League, Frequently Asked Questions:
[What are the benefits of breastfeeding my baby?](#)

National Women's Health Information Center:
[Benefits of Breastfeeding](#)



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